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Panther Sports News

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LA/BB OPP

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CHARLESTON, IL (Jan. 7, 1986)--You gotta love it!! The electricity is running rampant on the Eastern Illinois campus at the recent accomplishments of the Lady Panthers basketball squad. EIU is sporting a nifty 9-2 record overall and a 2-0 mark in the Gateway Conference.

Coach Barbara Hilke's squad has a early-season showdown with conference nemesis Southern Illinois (78-46, 65-40) Saturday night (Jan. 11) at 7:30 p.m. at Lantz Gym. SIU won both contests a year ago and the Salukis are 15-0 against the Panthers. (NOTE: EIU plays at Illinois-Chicago on Jan. 7).

The Lady Panthers--winners of five straight at home--have been as red-hot as "Refrigerator" sweatshirts during Christmas in Chicago. EIU opened up loop action with convincing wins against Wichita State (95-80) and SW Missouri (86-70). In fact the Lady Panthers have been going for the KO against their last five opponents:

Here are the numbers (over the past five games): EIU is scoring at a clip of 87 ppg while holding opponents to 62.8 points an outing...The Lady Panthers are shooting an impressive .514 (185-360) from the field as compared to .450 (138-307) by their opponents...Eastern opponents are averaging 37.8 rebounds as compared to 36.8 by EIU (NOTE: On the entire season, EIU foes hold a commanding 42.4-35.6 rebounding advantage)...Opponents are turning the ball over nine times more a game (28.2-19.4)...Eastern has recorded 80 steals as compared to 32 for its opponents...EIU's average margin of victory is 24.2.

"Our team really has jelled over the past few games," explains Hilke. "We play very well as a team and within our selves. The players seem to know their capabilities.

"The game against Southern will be a good yardstick for where the team is at. SIU is a great team...with outstanding personnel. They are bigger than we are in the middle...the key will be if we can defense them properly and not let them control the tempo."

A pair of seniors for the Lady Panthers have been heading the EIU attack by playing perhaps the finest basketball of their storied careers. Forward CHRIS ALDRIDGE (Taylorville) is living up to her accolades of being an all-league pick a year ago. The 5-10, 160-pounder is pushing for a plethora of post-season honors---including first-team All-Gateway and perhaps league Player-of-the-Year laurels.

Women's Basketball

Add 1-1-1-0

She is averaging just shy of 20 points a game (19.9) and 6.5 rebounds a game; Aldridge leads the club in both categories. During the winning streak, she is hitting an impressive .563 from the field.

5-5 guard MELANIE HATFIELD (Lawrenceburg, Ind.) is the sparkplug of the squad. The Naismith Award candidate is second on the team in scoring with a 15.3 mark. Hatfield is ranked among the league leaders in assists (61), steals (52) and blocks (8). She has drawn the eyes of many opposing coaches as one of the most versatile players in the Midwest.

"I think Melanie and Chris are playing the best they have ever played since coming to Eastern," states Hilke. "They both want to have great senior seasons and are playing within themselves. Both of them are aware of the responsibility they have to the team."

The flashy play of Hatfield and Aldridge may have caught opposing coaches eyes...but the rest of the starting crew has earned the opposition's respect. Senior center SUE HYND (Ottawa) is chipping in 10 points a game for EIU. Her .511 field goal percentage is best among Eastern starters.

Freshmen LISA TYLER (Aurora, Ind./South Dearborn) and SHERYL BONSETT (Scottsburg, Ind.) may well be the surprise rookies in the league. The 5-11, 175-pound Tyler is an imposing force on the front line but has the delicate touch of a diamond cutter around the basket. She is averaging eight points and 5.6 rebounds a game.

Bonsett has been the Eastern floor general this season. She is averaging 8.5 points a game and is coming off a career-high 19 against Wichita State. The 5-6 guard is second on the club in assists (77) and in free throw shooting (.807).

CUMULATIVE STATISTICS--EASTERN ILLINOIS

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL-1985-86

(Through 11 Games)

-PLAYER	G/ GS	FG/ FGA	FG%	FT/ FTA	FT%	PTS	AVG	REB	AVG	PF/ D	AST	TO	BLK	STL	MIN-
Chris Aldridge	11/ 11	91/ 193	.472	37/ 54	.685	219	19.9	71	6.5	25/ 0	35	38	2	30	373
Melanie Hatfield	11/ 11	71/ 160	.444	26/ 32	.813	168	15.3	50	4.6	28/ 2	61	40	8	52	380
Sue Hynd	11/ 11	48/ 94	.511	22/ 31	.710	118	10.7	46	4.2	29/ 1	8	16	2	10	272
Sheryl Bonsett	11/ 9	34/ 71	.479	25/ 31	.807	93	8.5	17	1.6	22/ 0	37	46	0	25	316
Lisa Tyler	11/ 10	36/ 71	.507	16/ 22	.727	88	8.0	62	5.6	13/ 0	28	25	2	17	309
Pat Hamilton	10/ 0	24/ 46	.522	4/ 8	.500	52	5.2	8	.8	5/ 0	5	10	0	11	85
Brenda Webb	8/ 0	12/ 30	.400	12/ 15	.800	36	4.5	26	3.3	19/ 0	1	5	2	5	95
Michelle Newman	9/ 1	12/ 36	.333	9/ 14	.643	33	3.7	20	2.2	12/ 0	2	8	0	5	97
Shelly Ethridge	6/ 2	4/ 19	.211	6/ 6	1.000	14	2.3	7	1.2	7/ 0	9	14	1	5	92
Kerry Walsh	9/ 0	6/ 12	.500	5/ 12	.417	17	1.9	18	2.0	10/ 0	5	3	2	3	78
Ann Brown	9/ 0	4/ 13	.308	5/ 8	.625	13	1.4	15	1.7	7/ 0	3	9	0	0	65
Liz Cavanagh	7/ 0	4/ 10	.400	2/ 4	.500	10	1.4	4	.6	1/ 0	4	2	0	7	38
Team Rebounds								47							

EIU	11/ 11	346/ 755	.458	169/ 237	.713	861	78.3	391	35.6	178/ 3	198	216	19	170	—
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Team Rebounds								49							
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Opponent Totals	11/ 11	304/ 683	.445	99/ 150	.660	707	64.3	466	42.4	223/ 9	169	289	40	112	—
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-PER GAME AVERAGES-

-PLAYER	FG	FGA	FT	FTA	PTS	REB	AST	TO	BLK	STL	MIN-
Chris Aldridge	8.3	17.6	3.4	4.9	19.9	6.5	3.2	3.5	.2	2.7	33.9
Melanie Hatfield	6.5	14.6	2.4	2.9	15.3	4.6	5.6	3.6	.7	4.7	34.6
Sue Hynd	4.4	8.6	2.0	2.8	10.7	4.2	.7	1.5	.2	.9	24.7
Sheryl Bonsett	3.1	6.5	2.3	2.8	8.5	1.6	3.4	4.2	.0	2.3	28.7
Lisa Tyler	3.3	6.5	1.5	2.0	8.0	5.6	2.6	2.3	.2	1.6	28.1
Pat Hamilton	2.4	4.6	.4	.8	5.2	.8	.5	1.0	.0	1.1	8.5
Brenda Webb	1.5	3.8	1.5	1.9	4.5	3.3	.1	.6	.3	.6	11.9
Michelle Newman	1.3	4.0	1.0	1.6	3.7	2.2	.2	.9	.0	.6	10.8
Shelly Ethridge	.7	3.2	1.0	1.0	2.3	1.2	1.5	2.3	.2	.8	15.3
Kerry Walsh	.7	1.3	.6	1.3	1.9	2.0	.6	.3	.2	.3	8.7
Ann Brown	.5	1.4	.6	.9	1.4	1.7	.3	1.0	.0	.0	7.2
Liz Cavanagh	.6	1.4	.3	.6	1.4	.6	.6	.3	.0	1.0	5.4

EIU	31.5	68.6	15.4	21.6	78.3	35.6	18.0	19.6	1.7	15.5	—
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Opponent Totals	27.6	62.1	9.0	13.6	64.3	42.4	15.4	26.3	3.6	10.2	—
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-SCORE BY PERIOD	1	2	OT	OT	TOTAL-	-DEADBALL REBOUNDS-
EIU	385	476	0	0	861	28
Opponent Totals	321	386	0	0	707	22

OVERALL TEAM RECORD	9- 2	CUMULATIVE ATTENDANCE	2753	TOTAL AVERAGE ATTENDANCE	250
Gateway Collegiate	2- 0	HOME	1241	HOME AVERAGE	248
Badger Invitational	1- 1	AWAY	1512	AWAY AVERAGE	252
Fastbreak Fest	1- 1				